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Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: May 25, 1951

SUBJECT:

PARTICIPANTS: Ambassador Luis Quintanilla, Amb. of Mexico to OAS
Walter Thurston, S/P

COPIES TO: S/P - Mr. Watts
EE - Mr. Reinhardt

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Ambassador Luis Quintanilla called on me yesterday afternoon at his request.

He stated that some time ago he had been invited occasionally to Soviet Embassy receptions and dinners (he presumed because he had once been Mexican Ambassador to the Soviet Union and was known to have been somewhat friendly toward it) where he had made the acquaintance of one Sokolov--whom he variously described as Counselor of Embassy and First Secretary of Embassy. Sokolov had pressed this acquaintanceship somewhat and invited him to his home and called on Quintanilla. Quintanilla said he had reported the foregoing to Mr. Reinhardt.

The purpose on calling on me yesterday was, he said, to inform the Department that after a long interval, during which Sokolov apparently had been transferred, he had now received another invitation to the Soviet Embassy which he surmised might be for the purpose of establishing contact with him by some new member

new member of the Embassy interested in sounding out Mexican and Latin American thinking. He said he wished the Department to know about this from him rather than other sources and also to inquire if there was any way in which he might utilize the contact he expects to have established with him in our behalf. I thanked Quintanilla and made a non-committal reply to his last question.

Ambassador Quintanilla, who has been charged both in the United States and in Mexico with being a communist or pro-communist, stated that he had never been a communist or sympathetic with Soviet imperialist communism. He drew the distinction between communism as a doctrine and Soviet imperialism and in the course of his rather extensive remarks to me repeated several times that the great danger today is not communism in itself (which he believes would be defeated in an ideological warfare) but Soviet physical imperialism which must be challenged and suppressed. He stated that his own convictions have never gone beyond liberalism and that these convictions had led him to break with the Catholic Church when a young man because he found that it sought to control his freedom of thought and had led him to reject and repose Russian imperialist communism for the same reason.

As of possible interest, it might be further reported that he expressed the view and opinion that the United States had driven China into the arms of the Soviet Union when a different policy (which he was sure President Roosevelt would have followed) would have accepted Chinese communism and thereby lessened China's dependence on Moscow. He felt similar policies would have had similar results throughout the Far East and he expressed the fear that the United States had lost the position of leadership over nations seeking freedom from ancient colonialism, which it once had.

S/P:WThurston:vh